

First nest and egg records of Peruvian Plantcutter *Phytotoma raimondii*, by O. D. Boggs

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Peruvian Plantcutter *Phytotoma raimondii* is endemic to the dry forests of coastal northern Peru in dptos. Piura, Lambayeque, Cajamarca, La Libertad, Ancash and Lima. Through a review of specimen material at the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM), Toronto, we are able to provide the first description of its nest and eggs, based on the collection of O. D. Boggs, a Canadian geologist who worked in the Talara oilfields of north-west Peru in the 1930s (McNicholl & Cranner-Byng 1994). His work took him to Peru and Ecuador several times in 1926–39 and Colombia in 1945–46, during which he collected a total of 637 bird skins and 124 eggs, all deposited at the ROM, with a few at the Natural History Museum, Tring, UK (M. P. Adams pers. comm.).

Boggs collected two clutches belonging to Peruvian Plantcutter, with the following information adapted from his specimen labels: Clutch 1—*Locality*: Near Talara, Peru (04°33'S 81°13'W; elevation 82 m. *Date*: 27 March 1934. *Eggs*: two, incomplete clutch. *Incubation*: fresh. *Identity*: female taken [ROM 36.7.20.12]. *Nest*: c.2 m up in a small algarroba tree. *Remarks*: one fully developed egg similar to others found in oviduct of female. Clutch 2—*Locality*: Near Talara, Peru (coordinates and elevation as previous). *Date*: 4 April 1934. *Eggs*: three, complete clutch. *Incubation*: advanced. *Identity*: both birds seen; male collected but not preserved. *Nest*: a frail, shallow affair of twigs, c.2.5 m up near the centre of a small, dead, algarroba tree. Eggs visible from below. *Remarks*: male had very little red on the forehead.

Measurements of the five eggs taken by the authors give a mean length of 24.17 mm and mean width at circum of 19.13 mm. They are short oval to subelliptical and smooth with a slight gloss, light drab to drab varying to greyish olive, with fine to coarse dark brownish-olive flecks at the larger end. Some fading can be assumed due to time in storage.

Counting the egg found in the oviduct, clutch size for both nests was three eggs, assuming the females had completed ovulation. The algarroba trees mentioned would be *Prosopis* sp., probably *Prosopis pallida*, the commonest species in coastal north-west Peru.

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Reference:

McNicholl, M. K. & Cranner-Byng, J. L. 1994. *Ornithology in Ontario*. Special Publ. 1. Ontario Field Ornithologists, Toronto.

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Figure 1. Eggs of Peruvian Plantcutter *Phytotoma raimondii* taken near Peru, north-west Peru, held at the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto (Brad Millen)